



# WPD News

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Joe Sullivan, Police Chief

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## WPD announces Cold Case Homicide Clearance

The Wichita Police Department (WPD) is announcing the successful resolution of a long-standing Cold Case Homicide investigation, thanks to cutting-edge technology and invaluable partnerships within the law enforcement community.

On October 2, 1989, tragedy struck when Krista Martin was discovered deceased in a residence in the 500 block of South Osage. Initial efforts included the collection of DNA evidence, although, at the time, DNA testing and CODIS systems were not available. Nonetheless, the DNA evidence was carefully preserved.

Despite conducting numerous interviews and analyzing the available evidence, investigators were unable to identify a suspect. Undeterred, they continued to scrutinize the evidence and gather new leads over the ensuing years. DNA samples were collected from multiple individuals for comparison with the evidence from the scene, yet no match was found.

Between 1990 and 1992, the original case detective sent evidence to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) crime lab in hopes of identifying a suspect, but unfortunately, this effort yielded no results, leaving the case unsolved.

In 2009, the DNA evidence was submitted to the Sedgwick County Regional Forensic Science Center, resulting in the development of a potential suspect profile. This profile was uploaded to CODIS, but once again, it did not lead to any matches. Further DNA sampling from potential suspects also proved unsuccessful.

In 2020, the Wichita Police Department, leveraging advanced technology, again sought the assistance of the FBI to re-evaluate the DNA evidence collected in 1989.

In 2021, a dedicated team consisting of a Wichita Police Homicide Detective and an FBI Special Agent embarked on a journey to Alabama and Arkansas, collaborating with additional Federal Agents working in Maryland. Their mission was to conduct extensive interviews and gather additional evidence to break the case.

The investigation persisted into 2022, and WPD joined forces with private industry genealogists to scrutinize DNA profiles and attempt to identify a suspect. Finally, in April of 2023, a possible suspect, Paul Hart, emerged. It was discovered Mr. Hart died in a traffic collision in Memphis, TN, in March of 1999.

In June of 2023, the WPD homicide detective and FBI Special Agent traveled to Arkansas, where they collected additional DNA samples from direct relatives of Mr. Hart. They continued to conduct interviews and submitted DNA evidence for further analysis.

In collaboration with the FBI, an Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) Team, Othram and the Sedgwick County Regional Forensic Science Center, WPD investigators were able to utilize IGG techniques to confirm that Mr. Hart was the suspect in the 1989 homicide of Krista Martin.


Upon presenting the facts of the case to Sedgwick County District Attorney Marc Bennett, it was determined that charges would be filed if Mr. Hart were still alive. As he is deceased, this case is now considered cleared.

The Wichita Police Department remains steadfast in its commitment to identifying suspects in violent crimes and providing support to victims and their families. We pledge to continue our unwavering dedication to Cold Case investigations.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the partner agencies and organizations that played a pivotal role in this investigation. Without their invaluable support, these complex cases would remain unresolved.

If you have information regarding any criminal case please call WPD investigators at 316-268-4407, Crime Stoppers at 316-267-2111, or the See Something Say Something hotline at 316-519-2282.

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